

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-6. (Canceled)

7. (Withdrawn) A fuel cell comprising:

an anode;

a cathode; and

an electrolyte membrane disposed between the electrodes, wherein the electrolyte membrane comprises a matrix comprising a proton-conducting polymer and a sheet substantially consisting of an inorganic fiber.

8. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell according to claim 7, wherein the anode comprises a catalyst capable of generating hydrogen from methanol.

9. (Withdrawn) The fuel cell according to claim 8 which is intended for use in a direct methanol fuel cell.

10. (Withdrawn) A method for producing an electrolyte membrane which is intended for use in a fuel cell comprising the steps of:

obtaining a sheet substantially consisting of an inorganic fiber;

obtaining a fluid composition comprising a proton-conducting polymer dissolved or dispersed in a solvent;

impregnating the fluid composition into the sheet; and

removing the solvent from the composition.

11. (Withdrawn) A method for producing an electrolyte membrane which is intended for use in a fuel cell comprising the steps of:

obtaining a sheet substantially consisting of an inorganic fiber;

obtaining a fluid composition comprising one or two or more monomers capable of polymerizing to form a proton-conducting polymer; impregnate the fluid composition into the sheet; polymerize the monomer or monomers contained in the composition in the above state; and removing the solvent from the composition.

12. (Withdrawn) A method for suppressing methanol crossover in a fuel cell in which methanol is supplied as fuel comprising the steps of:

obtaining an electrolyte membrane comprising a sheet substantially consisting of an inorganic fiber and a matrix comprising a proton-conducting polymer; and using the electrolyte membrane as an electrolyte membrane disposed between an anode and a cathode of a direct methanol fuel cell.

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12, wherein a woven cloth or a non-woven cloth consisting substantially of the inorganic fiber is used as the sheet.

14. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12, wherein an electrolyte membrane is used with at least a portion of the sheet implanted in the polymer matrix.

15. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12, wherein an electrolyte membrane is used with almost the entire sheet implanted in the polymer matrix.

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 12, wherein glass fiber is used as the inorganic fiber.

17. (Currently Amended) An electrolyte membrane which is intended for use in a fuel cell comprising:

a matrix comprising a perfluorinated proton-conducting polymer and a sheet having a porosity of 10% to 90% by volume and substantially consisting of a glass cloth,

wherein the glass cloth is formed by weaving a plurality of glass yarns and each of the plurality of glass yarns is formed by bundling a plurality of glass fibers, a size of an opening of the glass cloth is between 20  $\mu\text{m}$  and 300  $\mu\text{m}$ , the entire sheet is implanted in the polymer matrix so that the surface of the electrolyte membrane is constituted of the polymer matrix; and a thickness of a portion of the polymer matrix that has the sheet embedded therein is between 30% and 80% of the entire thickness of the matrix.

18. (Previously Presented) The electrolyte membrane according to claim 17, wherein a width of each of the plurality of glass yarns constituting the glass cloth is in a range of 10  $\mu\text{m}$  to 150  $\mu\text{m}$  when the sheet is viewed from a thickness direction.

19-21. (Canceled)